

Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant

Indiana

Indiana Is Educating Its Public Health Workforce

“The ability to lead at any level is critical because our public health workforce is changing—our capacity, our capability, and our challenges. Most importantly, the ability to effectively lead at any level is important because people matter. Without capable, confident people, we don’t get results. Without results, public health cannot respond and adapt.”

Pam Pontones, Deputy Health Commissioner/State Epidemiologist
Indiana State Department of Health

Public Health Problem (Issue)

In 2014, The Association of State and Territorial Health Officers (ASTHO) surveyed the public health workforce through Public Health Workforce Interests and Needs Survey (PH WINS). This national survey provided a glimpse into the needs, attitudes, and demographics of the public health workforce. For example: virtually all the respondents (94%) to the WINS questionnaire believe that “fostering a culture of quality improvement” is important and will most likely impact day-to-day work (70%)¹. Additionally, practicing evidence based public health was identified as one of the most highly rated trends in terms of importance (93%)^[1]. Fewer than one in five public health workers have a degree in public health^[2], which could indicate a potential gap in traditional public health knowledge.

At the Indiana State Department of Health, the Office of Public Health Performance Management (OPHPM) is responsible for identifying and addressing gaps in the public health workforce in Indiana and uses the WINS report to craft its strategy to increase the capacity of Indiana’s workforce.

^[1] <http://www.astho.org/phwins/Key-Findings/>

^[2] <http://www.astho.org/phwins/Key-Findings/>

Taking Action (Intervention)

The Office of Public Health Performance Management (OPHPM) uses Block Grant Funds to provide public health workforce development opportunities. Keeping in mind major themes from the WINS report, OPHPM is committed to improving the dissemination of evidence based public health and providing quality improvement opportunities in the agency. To achieve this, ISDH continued a subscription to the TRAIN learning management platform to provide an online avenue for learning development and deployment. This tool ensures that the latest evidence based public health techniques can be broadcasted statewide in a short time. TRAIN is free to use for Indiana residents, and provides access to hundreds of a wide variety of public health courses sortable by subject area. In addition to the access to a vast library of courses, ISDH staff are able to author courses specific to Indiana’s needs. For example, the Division of Trauma and Injury Prevention utilizes TRAIN to provide a monthly trauma quiz for emergency room staff at trauma centers. ISDH’s Tuberculosis division uses TRAIN to provide varying levels of education to hospital staff providing TB skin testing.

In the summer of 2016, ISDH utilized Block Grant dollars to contract with Purdue Healthcare Advisors, an organization with expertise in quality improvement (QI) in public health settings. The deliverables of the contract include training and certifying a cohort of lean practitioners, providing Rapid Improvement Events for four programs within the agency, and providing lean daily improvement training to ISDH staff.

Lastly, ISDH provides leadership development classes, Leadership at all Levels, for all staff at the agency and beyond. Public health requires individuals to be leaders in their field, and these classes provide the foundation for that knowledge. Broken up into three 10-week courses, Core, Intermediate, and Advanced, students are guided through a highly regarded curriculum.

Impact

- Over 14,800 Indiana residents use TRAIN as way to build their public health capacity.
- Five divisions in the agency have created tailored trainings for their constituents.
- A cohort of nine public health professionals were trained as Lean Practitioners; they will serve to amplify the importance of quality improvement in the agency.
- As a result of an OPHPM quality improvement event in Environmental Public Health, 100% of all commercial plan reviews are being completed in 30 business days.
- Nearly 60 ISDH staff graduated from the Core Leadership at all Levels class during the block grant time period.

Footnotes

Association of State and Territorial Health Officers. (2015). *PHWINS*. Retrieved from astho.org: <http://www.astho.org/phwins/National-Summary-Report-of-Workforce-Data/>

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Healthy People Objective

Continuing Education of Public Health Personnel

PHHS Block Grant Funding

100% - Total source of funding

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For more information on the

PHHS Block Grant, go to

www.cdc.gov/phhsblockgrant

For more information on

Healthy People, go to www.healthypeople.gov

PHHS Block Grant Supports

Indiana Healthy People Priorities

The PHHS Block Grant provides flexible funding that states can use to prevent and control chronic diseases, respond quickly to outbreaks of infections and waterborne diseases, and address their specific public health needs. States can align their programs with health objectives from [Healthy People](#).

Indiana uses its funds to address 14 health objective priorities, including

- Cardiovascular Health.
- Community Water Fluoridation.
- Accredited Public Health Agencies.
- Public Health Agency Quality Improvement Program.
- Health Improvement Plans.

For a complete list of funded health objectives, go to

<http://www.cdc.gov/phhsblockgrant/stateHPprior.htm>.